

Message Text

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ORIGIN ABF-01

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 A-01 MMO-01 SIG-03 ARA-10
EUR-12 EA-10 /054 R

DRAFTED BY A/BF/OAG;JHSOUTHERLAND:SB
APPROVED BY M:BHREAD
A:JMTTHOMAS
M/MO:JMEALUM
A/BF:DLWILLIAMSON
S/IG:MSMITH
EUR/EX:DLEIDEL
EA/EX:JMORAN
ARA/MGT:WCALDERHEAD
GAO:ESTAATS (IN DRAFT)

-----104614 160742Z /11

R 160036Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM
USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
AMEMBASSY VIENNA
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY MANILA
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AMEMBASSY TAIPEI
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY MEXICO
AMEMBASSY CARACAS
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMCONSUL RIO DE JANEIRO
AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

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STADIS////////////////////////////////////

BRUSSELS ALSO FOR EEC; VIENNA ALSO FOR IAEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: AGAO

SUBJECT:EXPANDED ROLE OF GAO AND GAO VISITS TO SELECTED
POSTS

FOR AMBASSADORS AND PRINCIPAL OFFICERS FROM BEN READ

1. CONCERNS EXPRESSED AT RECENT EUROPEAN COM MEETING IN LONDON AND A REVIEW OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE INDICATE THAT THE NUMBER OF VISITS CONDUCTED OVERSEAS HAS INCREASED SUBSTANTIALLY AND EXPANDED INTO AREAS NOT PREVIOUSLY DEALT WITH. AS LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS OF THE CONGRESS CONTINUE TO ASSIGN NEW INVESTIGATIVE AND EVALUATIVE RESPONSIBILITIES TO THE GAO, COMPTROLLER GENERAL STAATS HAS REDIRECTED AGENCY'S EFFORTS INCREASINGLY TOWARDS MAJOR ISSUES FACING THE U.S. THE GAO'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CURRENT LIST OF PROJECTS REFLECTS THE INCREASING INTERESTS OF THE CONGRESS IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INCLUDES THE FIELD OF INTERNATIONAL ECONOMICS, FOREIGN MILITARY ASSISTANCE, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY, NARCOTICS AND REFUGEES TO MENTION JUST A FEW EXAMPLES. AT THE EXPRESS INTEREST OF THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL, THE GAO HAS RECENTLY UNDERTAKEN MORE INTENSIVE STUDIES TO OBTAIN COMPARATIVE DATA FROM DEVELOPED INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES OF EUROPE AND THE FAR EAST FOR COMPARISON WITH SIMILAR U.S. GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS.

2. THE EVOLVING ROLE ASSIGNED TO THE GAO HAS OBVIOUSLY NECESSITATED CHANGES IN THE TYPE OF WORK PERFORMED BY THE GAO AND AN INCREASE IN GAO VISITS TO SOME OVERSEAS POSTS. IN A FEW CASES MULTIPLE OR OVERLAPPING GAO VISITS COULD RESULT IN TAXING THE LIMITED MISSION RESOURCES. THE COMPTROLLER GENERAL HAS ESTABLISHED PROCEDURES TO KEEP THE DEPARTMENT AND EMBASSIES FULLY INFORMED OF GAO'S PLANS AND ONGOING WORK. EFFORTS ARE BEING MADE TO PROVIDE INFORMATION WELL IN ADVANCE AS TO THE PURPOSE OF GAO REVIEWS, AND THE FOREIGN OFFICIALS, IF ANY, THAT GAO WISHES TO MEET. CONTACTS WITH FOREIGN NATIONALS WILL BE MADE THROUGH EMBASSY CHANNELS AND EMBASSY OFFICIALS WILL

BE ADVISED OF INFORMATION OBTAINED AND TENTATIVE CONCLUSIONS, IF ANY, BEFORE THE GAO STAFF LEAVES THE COUNTRY. EMBASSY OFFICIALS ARE NOT ONLY INVITED BUT ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND ANY MEETINGS BETWEEN GAO AND FOREIGN NATIONALS. WITHIN A FEW DAYS BEFORE RELEASING A REPORT WHICH CAN BE EXPECTED TO EVOKE A REACTION ON THE PART OF A FOREIGN COUNTRY, GAO WILL COMMUNICATE THE SUBSTANCE OF THE REPORT TO THE DEPARTMENT WHICH IN TURN THE DEPARTMENT WILL CABLE TO THE EMBASSY. GAO ALSO PLANS TO SEND THOSE EMBASSIES WHERE IT HAS SIGNIFICANT CONTACTS MONTHLY LISTINGS OF ITS REPORTS TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AS TO THE SUBJECTS OF INTEREST TO GAO AND TO THE CONGRESS.

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3. TO ASSIST THE DEPARTMENT IN UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES INVOLVED AND IN STRENGTHENING TRADITIONALLY CLOSE STATE-GAO RELATIONS, WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR REVIEW OF GAO ACTIVITIES IN COUNTRY DURING THE TWO YEAR PERIOD ENDING JULY 30, 1978, AND YOUR COMMENTS ON THE FOLLOWING POINTS:

A. FREQUENCY AND TRENDS OF GAO VISITS. WHAT HAS BEEN THE FREQUENCY OF GAO VISITS FOR EACH OF THE YEARS IN QUESTION? WHAT HAS BEEN THE AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY AT EMBASSY AND CONSTITUENT POSTS? COMMENT ON THE TRENDS IN FREQUENCY AND DURATION OF VISITS. ARE THE DURATION OF THE VISITS REASONABLE? ARE GAO TEAMS THE OPTIMUM SIZE AND COMPOSITION (AUDITORS VS OTHERS, ETC)? CAN YOU SUGGEST MEANS FOR IMPROVING EFFICIENCY OF VISITS, E.G. THE SUBMISSION OF ADVANCE QUESTIONNAIRE OR STATEMENT OF PURPOSE OF VISIT AND POINTS TO BE RAISED WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS OR OTHERS PRIOR TO ARRIVAL OF GAO TEAM?

B. DEMANDS ON POST'S RESOURCES. COMMENT ON THE REQUIREMENTS MADE BY THE GAO TEAM WHEN THEY VISIT THE POST, E.G. DOES POST PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION, SECRETARIAL, OR

OTHER SERVICES? ARE OVERTIME PAYMENTS TO STATE PERSONNEL INVOLVED?

C. REACTION OF HOST COUNTRY TO GAO VISIT. WHAT IS THE GENERAL REACTION TO VISITS BY GAO REPRESENTATIVES? DO GAO TEAM MEMBERS SEEM TO BE QUALIFIED AND CONDUCT MEANINGFUL DISCUSSIONS WITH HOST GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND PRIVATE CITIZENS? HAVE GAO PERSONNEL BEEN TACTFUL IN ELICITING INFORMATION AND DATA FROM NATIONAL AND LOCAL OFFICIALS? HAVE GAO REPRESENTATIVES REQUESTS FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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LAWS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS BEEN RELEVANT TO THE VISIT?
WHAT SUGGESTIONS OR CONTROLS, IF ANY, HAS POST
ESTABLISHED GOVERNING SUCH CONTACTS?

4. THE POINTS CITED ABOVE OBVIOUSLY DO NOT COVER ALL
ASPECTS OF GAO VISITS. THEREFORE, THE DEPARTMENT WOULD
WELCOME ANY ADDITIONAL RELEVANT COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS
FROM THE FIELD REGARDING GAO VISITS.

5. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING RESPONSES TO
THIS MESSAGE BY SEPTEMBER 15. VANCE

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Message Attributes

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Draft Date: 16 aug 1978
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Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
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TAGS: AGAO
To: ANKARA ATHENS MULTIPLE
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Declassified/Released
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